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NATURE CONSERVATION NEWS

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MOSS LAKE DEDICATION DELAYED

The dedication of Moss Lake Sanctuary, between Rushford and Houghton, in Allegany County, N. Y., has been rescheduled for June 21 due to a delay in completion of the land transaction. The meeting will take place at the site.

A 30-acre tract adjoining the main Moss Lake tract will be acquired under terms of a contract recently negotiated by the Western New York Chapter through its treasurer, Mr. H. Everest Clements. Closing date for this new purchase will be September 15, and the amount to be raised is $4,000. This acquisition will bring the Moss Lake area up to a total of 105 acres and will provide valuable buffer protection for the lake and bog.

VOLO AND WAUCONDA BOGS

The committee charged with raising funds for Volo and Wauconda bogs in Lake County, Illinois, has been working diligently, with the result that $19,300 has come in over a period of about six months. Total project goal is $40,000, of which $10,000 is for Volo, $20,000 for Wauconda, and $10,000 for additional acquisition and necessary protective developments.

Timeliness of the Volo purchase contract is indicated by the fact that the former owner, Mr. Claude M. Garland has sold the remainder of his land. It has since been resold and is now likely to be split into a number of units. Mr. Garland's mansion, located near the bog, was recently destroyed by fire.

MISSOURI HOLLY AREA

A project has been undertaken to preserve a unique holly forest containing many specimen trees and other unusual plants. It is located on Crowley's Ridge between Dexter and Bloomfield, in Stoddard County, Missouri. Negotiations are under way for the acquisition of about 60 acres of land and cost will be somewhere in the neighborhood of $4,000. Mr. James Harvey and Mrs. James Stroud of Dexter, Mo., have been prime movers in this drive to preserve some remnant of the Mississippi Valley holly association. Although holly is somewhat common along the southern portion of the Atlantic coast, it is rather rare in the Mississippi Valley and is left over from the time of the inland seas which extended up from the delta of the Mississippi. The holly occurred only in the areas containing white sands which were originally deposited from the inland seas. Dr. Robert McDermott, who has been working on the holly project, has had enthusiastic response from leaders of the Southeast District of the Missouri Federation of Garden Clubs, who consider preservation of natural areas an important part of their program.

TUCKER PRAIRIE

A new Federal Aid highway is threatening to swallow up some 20 or more acres of the northern side of Tucker Prairie, a 160-acre tract near Kingdom City, Missouri. The prairie was acquired for preservation last year by the University of Missouri with the help of our Missouri Chapter. With the backing of other interested groups, Chapter officers are negotiating with the state highway department and their chief engineer, Mr. Rex Whitton. They hope to stress the significance of this tract to the point that the highway department will consider resurveying and moving the proposed highway north of the entire Tucker Prairie tract.

Tucker Prairie was recovering rapidly from grazing and hay cutting operations during this first year of protection. Blue stem and Indian grass provide an inspiring sight for those people passing the prairie on the highway. A new fence has already been erected to protect this tract. Scientific observations are being carried out under Dr. Clair Kucera and other botanists at the University of Missouri.

WESTERN MEETING

Three speakers will discuss "Standards and Policies for Preserving the Scientific Values of Wild Lands" at a meeting sponsored by the Nature Conservancy at Logan, Utah, on June 19. The symposium is being presented in conjunction with the meetings of the Western Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, at the University of Utah's Logan campus.

Dr. Carl L. Hubbs of Scripps Institution of Oceanography, La Jolla, California, will discuss a topic that is only beginning to receive the attention it badly needs: aquatic preserves, and the need to preserve the ecology of water areas. Dr. Ruth Hopson, of Portland State College, Oregon, will consider the problems posed by wild-

erness areas, with a case history of the Three Sisters area in Oregon. Selar S. Hutchings, Range Conservationist, U. S. Forest and Range Experiment Station, Ogden, Utah, will speak on selecting and managing natural areas in the intermountain rangelands.

The half-day session will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 19. Nature Conservancy members wishing to attend may obtain further information from the Western Regional Office, 1711-A Grove St., Berkeley 9, California. Information will also be provided about the many other sessions of the AAAS conference, which as a whole begins on Monday, June 16.

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Nature Conservancy will be held at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, on August 28, 1958. The program will include a session of contributed papers in the morning, luncheon, the business meeting in the afternoon, and a film program in the evening. On August 29 there will be a field trip to Pine Hills in conjunction with the Ecological Society of America. Preparations are in the hands of a committee headed by Lynton K. Caldwell of Indiana University Department of Government. Details of the program will be available at a later date. As has been our custom in the past, the meeting will be held in conjunction with the convention of biological societies sponsored by the American Institute of Biological Sciences.

The business meeting will include the election of officers and governors to succeed the following whose terms expire: Richard H. Goodwin, president; Robert W. Schery, vice-president; Elting Arnold, secretary; G. Flippo Gravatt, treasurer; Ernest Brooks, Jr.; Albert M. Fuller; Devin A. Garrity; Herbert A. McCullough; M. Graham Netting; James B. Ross; Aaron J. Sharp; and Daniel Smiley.

The nominating committee consists of William A. Dreyer, F. R. Fosberg, and Paul B. Sears. In addition to the nominations proposed by the committee, any member may submit nominations by letter to the secretary. The consent of the nominee must be obtained before his name is presented. All nominations must be submitted by July 19 and they will be listed in the official notice of the meeting, to be sent out after that date. Nominations may not be made from the floor at the meeting.

GIFTS IN PROCESS

As a result of the generosity of the former owners, three tracts are due to pass into Nature Conservancy ownership in the near future. Two of these, a thousand-acre tract near Quaker Hill in Dutchess County, N. Y., and a fifteen-acre area containing a pond on Kings Point, L. I., have been in the hands of land corporations whose stockholders are donating their interests. The third, an upland sinkhole pond in Missouri which is the home of gulf coastal plants unusual in the region, is to be donated by the owner when the Missouri Chapter has completed a survey and erection of a fence.

These projects have involved long-term negotiations due to complicated ownership and other problems but they are all well advanced now and we hope to announce their completion soon.

CALIFORNIA INVENTORY

An inventory of the most seriously threatened types of natural habitats in California has been made by the Nature Conservancy. Two all-day conferences of botanists and zoologists were held at the University of California at Santa Barbara on November 25, 1957, and February 21, 1958. Over 30 scientists participated in the sessions, and many others sent in contributions by mail. Chairmen of the meetings were Dr. Herbert L. Mason of Berkeley, and Dr. Raymond B. Cowles of Los Angeles.

Coastal salt marshes were agreed to be the most endangered type of natural habitat in the State. Of almost equal urgency are the remnants of grassland and wildflowers in the Central Valley of California, and the deserts of the southeastern corner of the State. Special concern was expressed for the unusually high number of rare plant species found in the State, many of them threatened with extinction, and for unique habitats such as the Channel Islands and submarine and tidepool areas. Copies of the report will be available from the Western Regional Office of the Nature Conservancy, 1711-A Grove Street, Berkeley 9, California.

NATURE CONSERVANCY CHAPTERS

MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER

The first Nature Conservancy chapter in the West was organized on April 12, 1958, at Carmel, California. Eleven persons became charter members of the group, which selected Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties as its territory, and adopted the designation of Monterey Bay Chapter. The officers are: Chairman, Joseph F. Carithers, of Carmel Valley; Vice-Chairman, Laidlaw Williams, Carmel; Secretary, Mrs. Margaret E. Moody, Carmel; and Treasurer, Mr. Philip W. Kearney, of Carmel. Mr. Carithers is Western Representative of the National Parks Association.

The Monterey Bay Chapter has been investigating the problem of preserving a portion of Elkhorn Slough at Moss Landing, California, an extensive salt marsh that is threatened in part by industrial development. The Chapter's territory includes 145 miles of Pacific shoreline, and rugged mountains up to 5800 feet elevation.

OHIO ACTIVITIES

On May 24, a meeting of Ohio members is to be held in the Ohio State Museum, Columbus, to complete the organization of an Ohio Chapter of the Nature Conservancy.

The initial decision to undertake formation of the chapter was reached at a meeting held in Columbus on January 18. Since that time an organizing committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Kenneth W. Hunt of Antioch College has been laying plans.

Many fine projects await undertaking in the state and already a committee for the Cincinnati region with R. Gardner Griffin as chairman is at work on plans for the first undertaking.

Development of Ohio activities received its initial impetus with the survey of natural areas in the state undertaken in the summer of 1956 by Dr. Hunt. A visit to the state by Dr. Goodwin last fall precipitated the January 18 meeting.

OTHER CHAPTERS

The Ohio group will become the eighth chapter of the Nature Conservancy. Existing chapters are listed below with dates of formation and present chairmen:

Eastern New York--Jan. 24, 1954--Robert Rienow
Long Island--Oct. 29, 1954--Robert C. Murphy
Missouri--Sept. 23, 1956--(recent election of officers)
Maine--Oct. 25, 1956--Wendell S. Hadlock
Illinois--May 3, 1957--Robert Bullington
(organized as the Illinois Division in 1951)
Western New York--July 17, 1957--Axel Heilborn
Monterey Bay--Apr. 12, 1958--Joseph F. Carithers

In addition, we are honored to have the Michigan Natural Areas Council serving as our affiliate and action agent for the state of Michigan. Under our agreement with the Council, contributions originating in the state are apportioned on the same basis as with chapters, 70% going to the Council and 30% to the Nature Conservancy and persons who join either organization enjoy automatic membership in both.

At least three other groups are in the process of chapter formation and we hope to make announcements concerning them in the near future.

MISSION BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

Vigorous action has been taken by scientists and citizens' groups in San Diego, California, to save an unspoiled salt marsh on Mission Bay. Hearings on the city's master plan for recreational development of the Bay were held on April 7 and 21. The marshlands have survived the rapid growth of California's third largest city, and were originally planned to be preserved as part of an extensive park around the shores of the Bay. However, they have been threatened with plans for filling them in with spoil dredged from the Bay. An earlier plan to fill in the marshes for a golf course had been defeated. A portion of the marsh has been given by a private owner to the University of California as a research area and nature preserve. After the April 21 hearing, the San Diego Planning Commission voted to approve the inclusion of a wildlife refuge with most of the marshlands in the master plan, in an undisturbed state, and to recommend extending it to cover the entire marsh if possible. The plan comes before the City Council for final approval on May 15th, 1958. The Nature Conservancy was among many organizations urging approval of the wildlife refuge.

CEDAR BLUFF RESERVOIR PRAIRIE

Recently a 50 year lease-agreement was drawn up by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Fort Hays Kansas State College for the preservation of 320 acres of native "mixed grass prairie" at Cedar Bluff Reservoir, Trego County, Kansas. The primary purpose of the agreement was to set the area aside as a natural area for long term ecological research purposes. Other use such as casual visitation is allowable only if compatable with the preservation of the prairie for study purposes.

BUCKS COUNTY PARKS

Picturesque and historic Bucks County, Pennsylvania, north of Philadelphia, is experiencing the current population and building boom to a marked degree. Population has soared 100% in the past eight years to reach a total of almost 300,000 today compared with 144,000 in 1950.

Park acquisition here, as elsewhere, has lagged behind the rush to develop and now for each person in the county there is about 150 square feet of park land or just enough space to park a car! Now, however, the Bucks County Park Board is making a concerted drive to catch up. On April 15, the Board sponsored a conference on The Preservation of Open Land which included talks by a number of nationally prominent leaders. Dr. M. Graham Netting of our Board of Governors was one of these. The conference was intended to impress upon local civic leaders the urgent need for action to combat urban sprawl.

Coincident with this conference, the Park Board has moved forward on other fronts with a variety of publicity materials including an attractive map inventorying the park and recreating land owned by public agencies, schools, clubs, and the like.

A further evidence of forward-looking action is the recent formation of the Bucks County Park Foundation to acquire land and publicize the need for preservation. The Foundation will derive its support from voluntary contributions and will be independent of the Park Board while working closely with it.

BLANKET SPRAYING

A halt in the controversial fire ant control program has been requested by the Southeastern Association of Fish and Game Commissioners, according to the Wildlife Management Institute. The Association's executive committee also has urged that Congressional appropriations be provided for research on the effects of the chemical poison on fish, game, and other animals.

A telegram sent out by W. H. Drinkard, director, Alabama Department of Conservation, states: "Urgently request strongest action possible to halt all insecticide treatments for fire ant control and to secure Congressional appropriation for comprehensive research to determine long-term effects on wildlife, fish, song bird and human populations. Field observations in Alabama indicate ant treatments with heptachlor may kill up to 75 per cent bird and game populations within first two weeks after application."

Many persons are urging prompt Congressional action on S. 2447 and H.R. 783, identical proposals by Senator Warren G. Magnuson of Washington and Congressman Lee Metcalf of Montana, that would institute adequate research into the effects of the economic poisons on fish and game.

Recent news from the Northeast indicates that New York and New Jersey will not use aerial spraying for gypsy moth control this year. Connecticut is already on record against the practice. Pennsylvania, however, plans to cover 400,000 acres.

The New York State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets was quoted by the New York Times on April 26 as saying the state plans to spend a year at research. Also he said there must be a better system of making sure that aircraft do not spray one area more than once and he indicated he did not believe the persons doing the spraying should be paid on a gallonage basis.

A court decision has not yet been reached on the injunction suit against blanket spraying by the Federal government filed by Dr. Robert Cushman Murphy, chairman of the Long Island Chapter, and others last year.

MORE—AND MORE—POISON PROBLEMS

Over 3,000 geese died in Oregon and California in March of this year from consuming poisoned grain placed in fields for mice. An eruption of field-mouse-populations in the Klamath Basin of southern Oregon and the Tulelake Basin of northern California last summer threatened damage to farmlands. Wildlife and agricultural agents distributed several thousand tons of grain poisoned with zinc phosphide and Compound 1080 to combat the mice. During the fall, when food was plentiful, migrating waterfowl ignored the poisoned grains, which had been dyed an unappetizing color. But when spring came, food was scarce and the geese turned to the poisoned grain. Some blame was placed on the farmers, who put out quantities of the poisoned bait indiscriminately without control by authorities.

Since the disastrous effects of the program on waterfowl, a system of control has belatedly been established to prevent poison from being placed where not needed or in areas frequented by geese. About 80% of the waterfowl of the Pacific flyway pass through this area.

This summer the Montana Fish and Game Department will be analyzing the results of last year's aerial spraying of 750,000 pounds of DDT over Montana forests by the U.S. Forest Service, to control spruce budworm. This "worm" is the caterpillar stage of a moth native to Montana, believed to have become epidemic at this time because of environmental conditions favorable to the caterpillars, but unfavorable to their enemies.

Studies last year showed that trout survived the spraying well. But there are hints that the ecology of the streams has been drastically affected. Insects common to the stream bottom, such as immature forms of May flies, stone flies, caddis flies and midges, suffered a 90% reduction. Since these are important trout foods, it is not known how the loss may have affected the fish in the following months. Nor is it known how long it will take the insect populations to rebuild. Evidence from other sources shows that DDT-killed insects are deadly to songbirds when followed by a period of partial starvation; that water plants may gradually absorb DDT and become poisonous to fish; that newly hatched salmon fry are killed outright. Since most of the studies have concerned only game fish, there is little information about the effects of blanket spraying on multitudes of other forms of life in the forests.

NORTHWEST WILDERNESS CONFERENCE

A broad array of wilderness problems and inspirational values was laid before a group of over 150 participants at the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs' second Northwest Wilderness Conference in Seattle on March 22 and 23. The lively program included speakers from Women's Clubs, sportsmen, labor, and timber and hydro-electric agencies, in addition to conservation organizations. The underlying question that drew the group together is: Can wilderness survive the relentless advance of American civilization--a civilization which owes its rapid growth to the exploitation of virgin resources? Can a new spirit to preserve and protect wilderness areas grow fast enough to save them before dams, lumbering, mining, grazing, and roadbuilding wipe them out forever? Provocative questions were raised by Charlotte Mauk, a director of the Sierra Club, in her address, "Wilderness Perspective." Miss Mauk asked how the quality of wilderness can be preserved under the impact of the recreationists themselves. By definition, wilderness must give solitude and undisturbed natural conditions. Will it have to be rationed in the future? And if so, how?

Of interest to Nature Conservancy members is the increasing emphasis being placed on the scientific justification for saving wilderness. The theme of the Sierra Club's 1959 conference in San Francisco has been announced as "The Meaning of Wilderness to Science." Wilderness proponents are demonstrating the complex importance of wilderness areas not just to recreationists but to society at large.

The west coast now has a wilderness conference of national importance each year, the Northwest conference alternating with that in San Francisco.

HAWK & OWL PROTECTION

Good news comes for hawks and the great horned owl in New York with the signing of the Enders Bill by Governor Harriman on April 12. Thus all birds of prey within the state now are protected except when a landowner apprehends one doing damage. Much credit goes to Mr. H. Everest Clements, treasurer of the Western New York Chapter, for this advance. The N. Y. State Grange supported the bill. Advances have been made in predatory bird protection in other states recently.

The Nature Conservancy is an independent member-governed organization dedicated to saving America's heritage of wild nature. Its specific object is to preserve natural areas as "living museums" of the primeval wilderness. Such tracts are precious for their scientific, educational, and esthetic values. They also afford a home for the multitude of kinds of living things that would otherwise vanish from the earth, destroyed by our civilization.

The work of the organization began in 1917 under the direction of a committee of the Ecological Society of America. In 1946 the Ecologists Union was formed to take over these tasks. In 1950 its name was changed to the Nature Conservancy.

The members of the Nature Conservancy invite you to join in this work. Membership is open to both individuals and organizations. A contribution of $3 or more entitles you to annual membership, one of $100 or more to life membership and one of $1,000 or more to patron membership. Your contribution is an allowable income tax deduction.

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